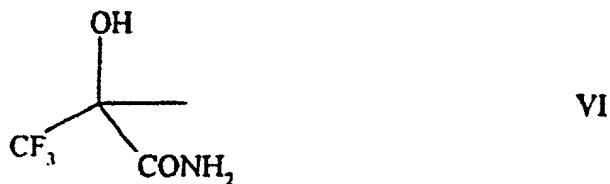


ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to a novel process for the preparation of (S)- or (R)-3,3,3-trifluoro-2-hydroxy-2-methylpropionic acid and to novel microorganisms capable of utilizing the propionamide of the formula



in the form of the racemate or of its optically active isomers as the sole nitrogen source.